

# Jo Bonner

## THE WASHINGTON CYBER REPORT

315 Cannon House Office Building ★ Washington, DC 20515 ★ (202) 225-4931 ★ May 2005

### BUDGET PROCESS MOVES FORWARD



At the present time, the House of Representatives is continuing to move forward through the FY 2006 appropriation process. Appropriations Committee Chairman Jerry Lewis of California has set an ambitious goal of passing all eleven appropriations bills by July 4. As of the beginning of the Memorial Day district work period we had passed four: Energy and Water Development, Homeland Security, Interior, and Military Quality of Life-

Veterans Affairs.

Additionally, the House recently approved the FY 2006 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on a strongly bipartisan vote of 390-39. This legislation authorizes \$441.6 billion in budget authority for the Department of Defense and the national security programs of the Department of Energy, as well as \$49.1 billion to support our efforts in the global war on terror. As this war on terror continues, the bill authorizes funding for force protection needs in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, including up-armored humvees, tactical wheeled vehicle recapitalization and modernization, night vision devices, and improvised explosive device counter measures. The bill also permanently increases the death gratuity to \$100,000 and extends from six months to one year the amount of time dependents of deceased servicemembers can stay in military housing or receive housing allowances. Finally, this authorization measure provides a 3.1% pay raise for members of the armed forces.

The Senate is expected to pass its version of the NDAA in the near future, and the House and Senate will then meet in conference to reconcile the differences between the two bills. Overall, the NDAA provides much-needed support for our men and women in uniform and their families at a time where our continued support is more vital than ever. In such uncertain times, it is very important that we in Congress do all we can to show our support for the armed forces by providing them with the equipment, funding, and security they need to carry out their mission.

### WORKSHOP FOR HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS GREAT SUCCESS

On April 29, 2005, I was honored to hold my third Workshop for High School Leaders, a tradition begun during the tenure of my predecessor, Congressman Sonny Callahan.



*Sandra Shaw, Anissa Centers and Andrew Finley field tough questions from the students.*

The University of South Alabama once again graciously allowed us the use of the Laidlaw Performing Arts Center Recital Hall, and over 150 students from high schools in all six counties of the First District participated in the day's activities.

The schedule of events was highlighted with a keynote address provided by Alabama Attorney General Troy King, who touched on a variety of current events and after his remarks took many questions from the students in the audience. Additionally, WPMI's Sandra Shaw, WKRQ-TV's Andrew Finley, and WALA's Anissa Centers spoke with the students on the importance and impact of news organizations on today's society.

The agenda also included (for the first time ever) a panel of college presidents in a discussion moderated by WALA's Bob Grip. The panelists included V. Gordon Moulton, President of the University of South Alabama, Dr. Gary Branch, President of Faulkner State Community College in Mobile, Dr. John A. Johnson, President of Alabama Southern Community College in Monroeville, and Dr. Mark Foley, President of the University of Mobile. Finally, I conducted my own one-hour question-and-answer session with the students in attendance.

As has been the case each year, this Workshop for High School Leaders was a tremendous success, and I appreciate all of the time and assistance provided by the hosts at the University of South Alabama and all of the panelists in attendance. Above all, the students should be thanked for posing some thought-provoking and challenging questions to each of the panels and for being concerned enough about their state and their nation to attend the day's events.

## TURTLE POINT ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE CENTER GETS RELIEF

One of the most unfortunate consequences of Hurricane Ivan in the seven months since that storm made landfall has been the tremendous amount of time it has taken to completely process all of the disaster assistance claims.

As a result of the numerous and severe storms that made landfall in the United States during this past hurricane season, the manpower and financial resources of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have been stretched incredibly thin. It took the assistance of an emergency supplemental funding bill, as well as the outstanding work of emergency management specialists at the local, state, and federal levels, to relieve the financial problems affecting those impacted by the storm.



*Shirley West, Director of the Turtle Point Environmental Science Center, takes me on a tour of the boardwalk to view the damage incurred by Hurricane Ivan.*

Recently, one of our important environmental education sites in south Alabama that had been severely impacted by Ivan received some very welcome news. Turtle Point Environmental Science Center, a site dedicated to the study and preservation of Big Escambia Creek and the Conecuh River basin, was significantly damaged by the storm. After several delays in the processing of their public assistance claim, and with the assistance of my district staff, we recently received the good news from the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (EMA) that a public assistance check for their hurricane-related claims has been processed and sent to the facility.

I am pleased this fine institution has received the help it needs, and I know it will be very important in allowing the Turtle Point Center to continue with its outstanding research and preservation efforts.

## From the mailbox...

*Dear Congressman Jo Bonner,*

*I wanted to take a moment to sincerely thank you and your staff for the attention you have given my VA claim.*

*It is heartening to see that my congressman can (and will) take time to try and help the little guy. Although I am registered democrat, I do not get caught up in superficial party "us vs. them." I vote according to intentions and results of the individual. You have not just talked about "Compassionate Conservatism." You have demonstrated it.*

*I voted for you in the last election, and I shall continue to vote for you and tell of the work and help you have given me.*

*Sincerely,*

*A satisfied veteran*

*April 26, 2005*



## CONGRESSIONAL ART CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

I am pleased to announce this year's Congressional Art Contest winner, Sara Nordmann of Murphy High School. Sponsored by the Mobile Museum of Art, the contest has for over two decades been a highly successful way of showcasing the artistic and creative talents of young people from across the nation.

Miss Nordmann was awarded "Best of Show" honors for her entry, "Aura/Lauren." Her artwork will be displayed along with other contest winners from across the United States for one full year in a corridor of the U.S. Capitol.

Other winners from this year's show were: second place, Monica Pavlov, St. Paul's Episcopal School, and third place, Ranbel Sun, Alabama School of Math and Science. Honorable mentions went to: Sandy Godwin, St. Paul's Episcopal School; Renita Allen, LeFlore High School; Jean Latham, St. Paul's Episcopal School; Caitlin Brown, St. Paul's Episcopal School; and Kristy Doss, Murphy High School.

Congratulations to all of this year's winners!



*Sara Nordmann receives her "Best of Show" certificate at the presentation ceremony at the Mobile Museum of Art.*